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**Birkbeck**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



2014 - 2017

**TR**ansforming  
Institutions by  
**G**endering Contents &  
**G**aining  
Equality in  
Research

**Project Report**  
*Birkbeck College 2021*





# Acknowledgements

*Professor Helen Lawton Smith*

We thank the entire team of the European Union TRIGGER project on gender inequality in academia, including project partners, internal and external board members, expert panellists, workshop participants, Birkbeck, University of London management and administration staff, and the project team which comprised Viviana Meschitti, Jeanne Le Roux, Andrew Atter, Mark Panton, Emma Curry, John Slater, Tahani Alharbi and Dina Mansour, with additional input from Rachel Lock.

We are also grateful to all those external stakeholders who hosted TRIGGER events, or engaged with us in disseminating TRIGGER outputs through their networks; for example, the Institute of Directors and the National Athena Swan Committee, Ireland. All of this activity has helped consolidate TRIGGER's legacy and, has led to real and tangible institutional change in terms of gender equality.

Thanks go to Baroness Joan Bakewell, President of Birkbeck College, for her support of this project, and to Vice-Chancellor Professor David Latchman for his thoughtful contribution to this report.

Thanks are also due to the team at Edward Elgar Publishing for their helpful guidance through the manuscript preparation and publishing process.

Finally, we are especially grateful to Henry Etzkowitz for bringing the TRIGGER project to Birkbeck in the first place. It was his work, alongside co-authors Carol Kemelgor and Brian Uzzi, in the seminal work *Athena Unbound: The Advancement of Women in Science* (2000) that inspired us.

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# TRIGGER

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# Foreword

**Professor David Latchman**  
*Vice-Chancellor of Birkbeck*

This significant five country European Union project on gender equality in academia resonates strongly with Birkbeck's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. TRIGGER has played a key role in providing analysis of what we were doing and of where we could improve. It has been excellent for Birkbeck to host this project.

TRIGGER was not an abstract research project, but comprised a set of actions that in some cases complemented and reinforced existing college equality initiatives. In others, it provided completely new perspectives, for example in addressing barriers to early career progression due to gender inequalities and gender differences in opportunities for commercialisation or research. Neither was it just about academics. It also concerned professional staff who are central actors in the Birkbeck community.

A key element for Birkbeck was the integration in the TRIGGER approach of different disciplines. It was a college-wide programme. In particular, it drew on expertise in the departments of Management and Organisational Psychology, and in the School of Science. A highlight was the extremely popular networking events which were inclusive of discipline, career stage and which promoted the inclusion of women scientists in external collaborations.

The TRIGGER project was required to deliver long term outcomes. At Birkbeck, working with Athena SWAN was and is a major focus. TRIGGER informed both Bronze and Silver Awards, and subsequent practice. The report highlights the continuing institutional, personal and professional legacy of the project.

TRIGGER, while not primarily research-focused, created an impressive academic output. This included the book published in 2020 *Gender Science and Innovation* by Edward Elgar as well as numerous articles and presentations.

TRIGGER has had an impact far beyond Birkbeck. As a European project, experiences are shared with the four other partners, and scholars in mainland Europe and North America. It has informed UK and Irish policy on gender equality. While the pandemic may have prevented this report being launched in 2020 the body of work has long-lasting outcomes for Birkbeck and the wider academy.

## Introduction

The **TR**ansforming **I**nstitutions by **G**endering contents and **G**aining **E**quality in **R**esearch (TRIGGER) was a project designed to understand the underrepresentation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Medicine (STEMM) subjects in academia, and the institutional changes needed. TRIGGER was an applied five-country research project funded by the European Union which ran from 2014 to 2017, and Birkbeck College (University of London) was allocated €400,000 to research and address the nature and causes of underlying gender inequality in STEMM fields.

In 2014 nine actions were drawn up to drive the project, designed to reinforce Birkbeck College's 2012 Bronze Award from Athena Swan (a scheme that recognises UK universities committed to gender equality in STEMM), and the Aurora programme (a leadership scheme devoted to women in UK higher education).

### ***TRIGGER's Nine Actions Fostering Gender Equality at Birkbeck:***

1. Researching gender cultures in science departments to identify potential gender-specific barriers and to develop recommendations for action.
2. Promoting the inclusion of women scientists in external collaborative arrangements.
3. Developing a permanent mentoring programme and handbook of best practice (in co-operation with Athena SWAN).
4. Implementing a Development Programme for fostering academic careers.
5. Training on integrating gender in scientific research procedures and contents.
6. Testing innovative research tools for the gendering of research procedures.
7. Mainstreaming a teaching module on gender for PhD courses.
8. Creating structural opportunities for the commercialisation of women's work in research and innovation.
9. Developing a leadership programme for women academics.

These actions were designed to build new perspectives beyond the traditional understanding of science as 'neutral' and unaffected by factors such as unconscious bias. Accordingly, while the project initially was targeted towards supporting the careers of women in STEMM fields where women are under-represented, the broader aim of TRIGGER was to effect institutional change across all schools and departments of the College, and model how this process could translate internationally across all fields.

### ***Key TRIGGER achievements***

- Extensive legacy of publications, reports, and conferences with international academic impact (see Impacts section for full details)
- Pilot TRIGGER-Athena SWAN mentorship scheme for women in STEMM, subsequently adopted across all Birkbeck departments in 2017

- 10 TRIGGER networking events with over three hundred attendees across the UK, Ireland, and Sweden, hosting academic and non-academic speakers from policy makers to businesspeople and campaigners
- Extensive internal and external events programme, including 10 networking opportunities, seminars for early career researchers, and entrepreneurship workshops
- Renewed Birkbeck College's Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2017 and 2020, expanded to all areas across the College and all staff groups
- Contributed to two Athena SWAN Awards to the Department Biological Sciences and Psychological Sciences (accounting for 67% of STEMM staff at Birkbeck), Bronze Award achieved in 2015, and Silver Award in 2018
- Recognition of "Building Workforce Diversity" and specific gender equality goals in the 2017 Birkbeck People Strategy, 'Building Success Together'
- Birkbeck membership of WISE (Women into Science and Engineering campaign)
- TRIGGER report submitted to the Women In Executive Management inquiry (2016) of Women and Equalities Committee, UK Parliamentary Select Committee, on the under-representation of women at executive level in UK business

### ***TRIGGER 2017 Statistics***

- More women academics in post than men (164 vs 153)
- Women academics more likely to apply for promotion than men (23% of women vs 15% of men) for the second year running
- Women academics more likely to be successful in their promotion application than men (84% of women versus 79% of men)

## **Action 1. Researching gender cultures**

***“Researching gender cultures in science departments to identify potential gender-specific barriers and to develop recommendations for action.”***

Initial consultation within the College established that Birkbeck needed a cohesive approach to underlying issues of gendering in research. There was no systematic cross-organisational approach to topics related to gender and gender equality, the impact of gender on careers, how to navigate organisational structures, and how to include considerations of gender in research. When added to the fact that PhD programmes were subject to different structures, and attendance requirements and credits varied widely and largely followed individual initiative or choice, it made for a fragmented picture of gender impacts across the College.

In 2014 the research remit of the project was being designed, focusing on the career trajectories and experiences of academic, professional, and support staff at Birkbeck. Staff from the School of Science and the School of Business, Economics and Informatics made up 35% of the College staff at the time. The initial study focused on 19 people from the two schools were interviewed individually, and 10 people participated in 2 focus group sessions

in 2014 and 2015, which gathered participants across career stages and professional groups (both academic and professional). Meetings from one research team were also observed.

## ***Findings***

The main findings of these initial investigations were that:

- Women represent only 25% of the professorial staff, but are represented significantly in junior roles
- Women take most care of their work-life balance
- Women with family obligations most often take on (or expected to take) the burden of work-life balance
- Women experience discrimination more often than men on their career path, especially indirect discrimination that undervalues their contributions or role
- Academics experience the greatest workload, but benefit from flexible working hours and more opportunities for professional development and training
- Junior academics experience the greatest career pressure relative to publication and grants
- Structural impediments to professional staff development lies in a lack of clear routes to career progression

Most senior academics showed a strong awareness of the need to commit to a more gender sensitive environment, and said they would welcome more management training to approach issues related to allocation of tasks, management of conflicts, gender and diversity.

## ***Recommendations***

With these factors in mind, in researching gender cultures and their impact on the career trajectories and experiences of staff at Birkbeck, the TRIGGER team put together the following recommended frameworks for the project goals:

- Devising well-targeted interventions for different disciplines
- Researching new career benchmarks which are work-life-balance friendly
- Listening to staff needs with the aim of solving problems
- Employing different mentoring forms (one-to-one, group& peer mentoring)
- Bridging the divide between academic and support staff
- Training for leaders on gender bias and stereotypes
- Holding women-only and mixed gender initiatives for broader discussions
- Addressing gender stereotypes through training at all levels

## Action 2. Promoting women scientists' external collaborations

*“Promoting the inclusion of women scientists in external collaborative arrangements.”*

As a group, women are under-represented among academic entrepreneurs, and less likely to commercialise their research than men. (For a review of commercialisation gender disparity data at Birkbeck, see *Action 8. Creating Opportunities for Commercialising Women's Work*). In investigating women's opportunities for external collaboration, the TRIGGER team found that a key component of this under-representation was networking.

### *Women and Networking*

In reviewing academic studies on women and networking, the TRIGGER team found that key research studies suggested that women's and men's networking behaviours differ, and generally perceived women's networks as less effective than those of men. These studies tended to support assumptions in academic literature about women's networking that needed to be challenged, including (but not limited to):

- Women network less than men
- Women have smaller networks than men
- Women's networks are smaller and/or more homogenous than men's, including more family and friends but fewer “weak ties” (acquaintances who can bridge between different groups)
- Women are less successful or proficient at networking than men

Underlying these assumptions is the general sense that women are fundamentally disadvantaged compared to men, and hence are simply not as good at networking, and reasons given to explain this include factors such as early childhood socialisation and work-life balance.

For academics themselves, the ability to create, develop and manage effective networks is crucial. This is because networks can create opportunities for individuals to collaborate on education and research projects, publish their work and commercialise their research. Networks are instrumental in academic career advancement, helping academics to highlight their achievements and bring new job or promotional opportunities to their attention. Within STEMM disciplines, networking may be more difficult due to the inherently specialised nature of these fields, and because innovation and commercialisation can be further complicated by funding and intellectual property issues.

In their investigations into academic women's networking behaviours and opportunities, TRIGGER also established further contributory factors, such as:

- **Length of academic service.** Women may be at an early career stage, and may not have had the opportunity to develop their networks and/or networking skills.
- **Break in service.** Women may have missed networking opportunities due to part-time working, parental leave arrangements, or career breaks.

- **Position held within the university.** Women may be excluded from particular networks if they are not employed at a senior managerial or professorial level.
- **Lack of information.** Women may be unaware of the existence of particular networks.

In order to address these issues, the TRIGGER project designed an innovative approach to promoting networking within the College.

### *TRIGGER Networking Events Strategy*

The TRIGGER networking strategy aimed to:

- Promote the sharing of knowledge and experience among stakeholders
- Help establish connections between individuals, both internal and external to Birkbeck
- Increase access to information, advice and resources
- Build valuable social capital

These outcomes were facilitated by the project running several thematic, discussion-based networking events during the course of the project. These networking events were organised around three key principles:

1. **Internal and External Engagement:** Events encouraged networking between Birkbeck's internal stakeholders across academic departments, and externally with universities, corporate organisations and policymakers in three countries: the UK, Ireland, and Sweden.
2. **Interactive Format:** A discussion-based format facilitated a valuable 'two-way' exchange of experiences between a panel of experts and networking participants. Each event focused on a particular theme within the broader gender equality debate, posing three key questions to a panel of experts, followed by audience questions. This was followed by informal and unstructured networking.
3. **Networking Reach:** TRIGGER networking events engaged more than 200 international participants in informal networking activities, allowing them to learn from experts, share experiences, and make valuable new connections both inside and outside of their own organisations.

### *TRIGGER Networking Events*

1. 'Improving gender equality in work – what can we learn from London's business and policy organisations?', Birkbeck College, London, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015
2. 'Career paths, gender and early stage careers', Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015
3. 'Adapting to changing career priorities', Birkbeck College, London, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015
4. 'Gender equality in entrepreneurship policy: looking to the future' Dundalk Institute of Technology, Ireland, 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015
5. 'Gender, entrepreneurship and innovation', Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in the Learning Economy (CIRCLE) at Lund University, Sweden, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015

6. 'Growing your ecosystem', Birkbeck College, London, 10th March 2016
7. 'Aspiring Female Professor/Manager – what can aspiring female professors/managers learn from those who have got there?', Birkbeck College, London, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016
8. 'Goal-Setting for Women Working in a Professional Environment', Birkbeck College, London, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016,
9. 'Improving gender equality in career development in STEMM disciplines: What can we learn from academia and the corporate sector?', Birkbeck College, London, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016
10. 'Established STEMM professor network Launch', Imperial Hotel, London, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016

### **Action 3. Developing mentoring programmes and handbook**

*“Developing a permanent mentoring programme and handbook of best practice (in co-operation with Athena SWAN).”*

Mentoring is a powerful professional tool, which is particularly key to developing the careers of under-represented groups in organisations, in fostering knowledge-sharing, and building interpersonal networks and social capital. Within academia recent studies have tracked the particular tangible positive outcomes from mentorship for women, as seen in heightened levels of promotion, research grants, and job satisfaction when compared with non-mentored women. Birkbeck had no College-wide mentoring programme, which meant many members of staff lacked any opportunity for formal mentoring. TRIGGER’s key mentoring objectives were to design and launch an inclusive mentoring scheme across Birkbeck as part of the College’s commitment to Athena SWAN, and to draw up a mentoring handbook for use across the college.

#### ***Findings***

In preparation for launching the scheme, TRIGGER reviewed the academic literature on mentorship, and the contemporary mentoring initiatives at UK universities, and found that:

- In academia historically, mentoring has been undertaken as an informal relationship between a more senior academic and a junior academic
- Mentoring must be carefully structured to promote equality and avoid favouritism, so that mentors are partners in organisational change, more aware of the challenges to junior academics’ careers through gendered expectations, rather than encouraging favouritism and unequal access to opportunities
- UK Universities are increasingly developing formal mentoring programmes, which are normally organised to promote the career trajectory of minority groups (e.g. women and ethnic minorities)
- Studies found it challenging to assess mentoring’s psychosocial benefits and their diffusion throughout academic institutions, and often did not scrutinise how they were run

- Recent scholarship emphasises the importance of considering ethnicity as a factor in mentoring, in order to avoid reproducing narratives of the elite group

TRIGGER developed a pilot mentoring scheme in 2013-2014, which focused on Birkbeck's staff in STEMM fields. Eight pairs of mentors and mentees were matched according to their needs, and given free rein to establish their own meeting schedule, with guidance on meeting frequency and suggested content. Separate introductory workshops were organised for groups of mentors and mentees, to provide training and give participants space for discussion and reflection outside the mentoring relationship itself at the start of the mentorship scheme. At the start and end of the year an introductory session was held for all participants, encouraging a sense of community and reflection on the experiences of all stakeholders involved in the scheme.

The scheme was then established in 2015 to include all members of the academic and research staff, both male and female, and not exclusive to permanent staff, run jointly by the TRIGGER team and the Birkbeck Human Resources Department. Registrations for the Mentoring Scheme for Professional and Support Staff open at the start of each academic year. Birkbeck's Mentoring Handbook of Best Practice was published in 2017, and can be found here: [http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/trigger/docs/Mentoring\\_Handbook\\_of\\_Best\\_Practice-Web.pdf/view](http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/trigger/docs/Mentoring_Handbook_of_Best_Practice-Web.pdf/view)

## **Action 4. Implementing a Development Programme for fostering academic careers**

### ***“Implementing a Science Development Programme for fostering academic careers.”***

In 2015 and 2016 TRIGGER put together a programme of six development workshops designed to prepare women and men to be more effective in gender balanced scientific work environments. These workshops were all-day events, encouraging experiential learning with role-playing exercises that simulated scenarios such as interviews for professional appointment selections and funding panels. The programme was designed through consultation with senior leaders and academic staff at Birkbeck, and was internally promoted. The workshop participants gave good feedback, and in order to maximise the impact of the programme TRIGGER decided to combine resources with the women's leadership programme.

## **Action 5. Training on integrating gender in scientific research procedures and contents**

*“Training on integrating gender in scientific research procedures and contents.”*

The TRIGGER project aims to show that the study of gender and sex differences can significantly enrich different disciplines and lead to more original and relevant research findings. Research shows demonstrates that studying sex differences is important, and should be incorporated further into research, and in more disciplines.

### ***TRIGGER and Babylab***

As a part of this commitment, TRIGGER supported some of the ongoing research at the renowned Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development at Birkbeck (CBCD), University of London, also known as Babylab (<http://www.cbcd.bbk.ac.uk/babylab>). Since its establishment in 1998 CBCD has been at the forefront of both methodological and theoretical innovation in child development, studying all its aspects (motor skills, attention, language), both typical and atypical. In 2014 and 2015 TRIGGER organised training workshops with the CBCD, and in conjunction with the Advisory Unit for Gendering Research (AUGR).

## **Action 6. Innovative Research Tools for Gendering of Research**

*“Testing innovative research tools for the gendering of research procedures.”*

In the past decade, CBCD has laid the foundations of new research into developmental disorders, being the first centre to follow up longitudinally cohorts of infants at genetic risk for autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This research has improved our understanding of developmental disorders and will allow for better screening and intervention programmes. An ongoing area of study is the genetic, epigenetic and environmental contributions to early development, which will also shed light on the significantly higher rate of boys than girls receiving a diagnosis of ASD or ADHD.

### **TRIGGER-Supported Case Study: Understanding the differences in the expression of developmental disorders in boys and girls**

The prevalence of developmental disorders such as autism or ADHD is higher in boys, while other conditions, such as anxiety disorders or depression, are more commonly expressed in girls. The factors that drive these differences, whether biological or environmental, are poorly understood. With the support of TRIGGER, a research project was undertaken to develop a framework for investigating sex differences in development in populations of infants at familial risk of autism, run in collaboration with King’s College, London. The participants in this study were recruited as part of BASIS, and looked at how some of the early biomarkers of autism relate to later autism symptoms in boys and girls. Interestingly, it was found that at

one year of age biomarkers were expressed similarly in boys and girls, but that they only predicted later symptoms in boys.

This research was published in the *Molecular Autism* journal in March 2016. Future work aims to understand the nature of protective factors that break the link between early biomarkers and later symptoms in girls.

## **Action 7. Teaching Module on Gender for PhD courses**

TRIGGER established through preliminary consultation within the College that Birkbeck's inclusion of topics relating to gender and gender inequality in PhD programmes was poor and fragmented. An improved awareness of the gendering of research procedures – the inclusion of gender as a factor in students' research – among PhD students at the College was held to be a key area of action for the TRIGGER project. Stakeholders consulted included:

- TRIGGER internal board, representing academics from different Schools at Birkbeck, and included the Deputy Director of the Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching at Birkbeck
- Birkbeck Graduate Research School, which supports the career development of postgraduate research students
- Birkbeck Gender & Sexuality group (BiGS), which promotes collaboration between humanities, arts, and social sciences in postgraduate teaching and research on gender and sexuality studies

Dr Viviana Meschitti also conducted a longitudinal research study at Birkbeck, interviewing PhD students in relevant fields at three different points in time about the impacts of gendered research practices and gender representation on their doctoral studies. This was published as a working paper [available on the TRIGGER website](#), with the title 'Embarking on a Doctoral Journey: Insights from a Longitudinal Study on Decision-Making during a PhD'.

### ***Findings***

The initial findings of the consultation revealed that:

- There is no unifying cross-departmental approach to, or philosophy for, postgraduate education at Birkbeck
- Most departments do not have a structured PhD programme, and required modules which are credit-based are the exception rather than the rule
- PhD students are encouraged to attend seminars, conferences, journal clubs, networking events, and summer schools on their own initiative
- There is no systematic cross-departmental recognition in PhD programmes or training re. gender and gender equality, such as how gender can impact careers, or how to study gender and include gender as a factor in students' research (gendering of research procedures)

The TRIGGER team felt it was particularly important that actions to address these issues should achieve the broadest impact possible, with extensive collaboration across multiple departments to ensure its sustainability. As a result it was decided that a series of seminars, rather than a formal module for PhD courses, would be the best way to achieve these goals. Each seminar would aim to raise awareness of a different aspect of the way different disciplines gender approaches to research among students, and how different societal groups are affected by gendered research in particular research contexts.

The series was designed by Dr. Viviana Meschitti (Convenor) with the support of Dr. Wendy Hein (TRIGGER board and BiGS) and Dr. Jennifer Fraser (then Deputy Director of the Centre for Transformative Practice in Learning and Teaching at Birkbeck). The events took the format of a discussion panel followed by a networking drinks reception, lasting approximately 90 minutes.

Each seminar was conducted as a structured conversation between an experienced female scholar, (usually a Professor) and a more junior scholar (a postdoctoral researcher or PhD candidate, invited by the experienced scholar). The more junior scholar would steer the conversation with a series of questions, facilitating the discussion, which was then opened to attendees. As series convenor Dr Meschitti selected the general topic of the seminar and invited the experienced scholar, and proposed issues to be discussed between the two speakers. However, the two speakers were free to suggest related topics or perspectives, to ensure a wide range of themes relevant and useful to PhD students.

The interactive format of the event was designed to be an opportunity for future researchers to learn from the experience of a more senior scholar, focusing on the scholar's personal experience of the issue under discussion, and its effects on her research practice. In this way each seminar could address the effect of a gendered approach to research in a specific discipline, and inform students about wider systematic issues around gendered research. This style of seminar was deemed the best way to ensure PhD students' ongoing engagement with the topics raised, reflecting on their own research, and encouraging experiential learning. The conversational format was also considered important by the TRIGGER team because it can be easily transferred across disciplines, departments, and institutions.

The overall goals of the series were to communicate to students:

- That research must address how different societal groups are affected by particular research contexts
- How gender can impact careers
- Ways to navigate organisational structures

The seminars were publicised through email campaigns targeted at all PhD candidates across the College at least a month prior to each event (with the assistance of the Birkbeck Graduate Research School), Birkbeck's media channels, the TRIGGER website, and through

word-of-mouth by TRIGGER team members and event speakers. The sustainability of the seminars was addressed by conducting questionnaires after each event, assessing the uptake and feedback from attendees, and maintaining already low event costs. The Birkbeck Graduate Research School awarded the TRIGGER team a small grant to cover the cost of two seminars in 2018.

#### **TRIGGER Seminars on Gender for PhDs:**

1. 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 'Building a research career: navigating the gendered organization'. Invited speaker: Alexandra Poulouvasilis, Professor of Computer Science, Birkbeck.
2. 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 'Researching gender: framing a research project and framing a research career'. Invited speakers: Dr Kate Maclean and Dr Gabriela Alvarez Minte, Department of Geography, Birkbeck.
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017, 'Researching gender: a psychological perspective'. Invited speakers: Dr. Teodora Gliga, Babylab, Centre for Brain and Cognitive Development, Department of Psychology, Birkbeck.
4. 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018, 'Qualitative approaches to study gender in management within a constructionist or interpretivist philosophy' (session supported by Birkbeck Graduate Research School). Invited speakers: Dr Rebecca Whiting, Department of Organisational Psychology, Birkbeck; Professor Rosemary Deem, Royal Holloway, University of London.
5. 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018, 'Researching gender equality in professional associations'. Invited speaker: Professor Colette Henry, Dundalk Institute of Technology.

## **Action 8. Creating Opportunities for Commercialising Women's Work**

*“Creating structural opportunities for the commercialisation of women's work in research and innovation.”*

The TRIGGER team set out to investigate the gender disparity in commercialisation at Birkbeck, and conducted an audit of patents or licenses and other commercial agreements, as well as analysis of the 30 grants funded by industry or commerce at the College during relevant periods of time.

Between 2011 and 2014:

- **3 patents filed:** 2 by women, 1 by a team of men and women
- **3 licenses taken out:** 1 by a woman, 1 by a man, 1 by a team of men and women
- **3 individuals involved** in all licences and patents: 2 male, 1 female
- **20 formal agreements with other parties** (mostly two way confidentiality or material transfer agreements): 9 of them involved 1 man, 5 of them involved 1 woman, 3 of them involved 1 man and 1 woman

Between 2010 and 2015 at Birkbeck:

- The majority of grants had a principal investigator who was male (19 out of 30 cases) with women being in the minority (11 out of 30)
- The majority of the 6 principal investigators who had received more than one award were male (5 men and 1 woman)
- Male-led activities in relation to female-led ones were funded by a ratio of 3:1 (£2,038,000 male-led, £604,000 female-led)
- In the School of Science all Higher Education Innovation Funds up to December 2014 went to men. 3 out of 5 bids made were successful (4 by men and one by a woman)

## *Findings*

TRIGGER's research suggested that rather than institutional obstacles to women commercialising their work, differences between disciplines, and a lack of awareness of opportunities for commercialisation, is a major source of the disparity between genders. Factors in this disparity include:

- Female-led grants are primarily in social science, and their effect on the overall trend in the College is neither strong nor significant
- Larger grants can be accompanied by facilities provided by industry partners (e.g. laboratory space and equipment) which also means more input in an advisory capacity for academics
- Men are more likely to put themselves forward for grants as Principal Investigators
- Men are more aware of opportunities for commercialising their research, through means such as applying for patents or industry collaborations
- Women expressed reluctance to be considered or treated as a separate category
- Commercialisation is enabled by academic seniority; it is easier to balance with an academic career at a more senior level, and networks and contacts are established, which further entrenches gender disparity when obstacles to women's career progression are factored in
- Suitable forms of support to promote commercialisation at Birkbeck are not universally available to meet the needs of academics.

TRIGGER issued a report on commercialisation in March 2015, and identified that expertise is required at early stages in research projects so that academics in disciplines such as Computer Science, Economics, Mathematics and Statistics are aware of what the commercial possibilities are on the basis of their unique research. Following the recommendation of this report, in 2015 the School of Business, Economics and Informatics appointed a Research Development Manager.

## **Action 9. Developing a Leadership Programme for Women Academics**

### ***“Developing a leadership programme for women academics.”***

The leadership programme is a crucial result of the TRIGGER project at Birkbeck, created and delivered to enable female professional staff and academics – particularly within the School of Sciences and the School of Business, Economics and Informatics – to progress within their careers.

For generations gender equality in the workplace, across every sector, has been a goal rather than an accomplishment. The TRIGGER team found that, in reviewing both academic studies and business reports, that organisations are not developing future talent pipelines for women, which would redress the imbalance. This lack of pipelines to the top is best shown in the persistent low level of female representation on the executive boards of FTSE 100 companies, despite increasing drives to recruit women. Similarly in higher education, studies have shown that the increasing number of female students enrolling for STEM undergraduate programmes and the increasing number of women gaining a PhD is, in itself, not enough to achieve a gender balance.

The underrepresentation of women in STEM, and in more senior roles across disciplines, and organisations, could be tackled through the creation and delivery of career development programmes. TRIGGER’s initial findings pinpointed several issues specific to the underrepresentation of women in higher education:

- Women are particularly under-represented in STEM subjects, as well as more generally across the disciplines
- Women are under-represented in the most senior academic ranks of nearly all disciplines (a phenomenon generally known as the ‘Glass Ceiling’ phenomenon)
- Higher education institutions in the UK have developed numerous small-scale projects, mainly devoted to individual leader development rather than systematic leadership programmes, and without tangible systematic outcomes

### ***Leadership Programme***

Discussions with Birkbeck’s Gender Equality Groups and the TRIGGER external advisory board, and TRIGGER’s initial findings, revealed that there was often a specific “pain point” in the early stages of a woman’s career progression, common to academics, support staff, and professional services staff alike, which could be addressed by the leadership programme. The programme encompassed workshops, networking events and providing opportunities for acquiring new data and information. It was undertaken by Birkbeck’s School of Business, Economics and Informatics, and the School of Sciences, in both of which women are especially under-represented.

The need for leadership and networking opportunities in the professional services sector at Birkbeck was revealed by Birkbeck ASTREA, a grassroots organization for women in professional services to network which aims to shift Birkbeck organisational culture. As a result of a survey and meetings with the TRIGGER team, this led to professional services staff being included in two of the three groups targeted by the programme to overcome key career hindrances:

- a) **Junior careers** – defined as academics, researchers, and professional services staff in the first 7 years of their career
- b) **Aspiring professors and managers** – academics, researchers, and professional services staff aiming to be promoted to professor or managerial roles
- c) **Newly-promoted and experienced professors**

In designing the programme the TRIGGER team conducted surveys, reviewed leadership schemes in operation at other colleges (e.g. Royal Holloway), and held meetings with senior leaders in professional services and with academics. TRIGGER created tailored activities for each target group as part of the programme.

### Junior Careers

- 3 seminar-style workshops on leadership 2016-2017
  - September 15<sup>th</sup> 2016, **Goal Setting**
  - 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016, **Boy brain, Girl brain?:** What have we learned about sex differences from studying typical and atypical brain development?
  - 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017, **Working the Room:** Developing your network skills
- 1 networking event devoted to information exchange between professional services and academics 2016
  - Birkbeck intranet website devoted to career progression for early career researchers

### Aspiring professors and managers

- 3 seminar-style workshops on leadership 2016-2017
  - 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016, **Developing your career.** Discussion panel with four female professors and senior professional staff from across the University of London, who discussed their paths to promotions, including inspirations and ambitions.
  - 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017, **Be Agile**, devoted to developing a leadership style which can build motivated and diverse teams.
  - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017, **Influencing Skills**, aimed at training participants in dealing with difficult situations as managers
- Series of networking events devoted to information exchange between professional services and academics 2016-2017

- Video series of 6 interviews, *Inspiring Female on their Career Progression* with Birkbeck academics and staff on their career paths to leadership positions, and the challenges they faced, 2016-2017:
  - **Gilly Gambardella**, Post Graduate Team Leader, Department of Management, School of Business, Economics and Informatics, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016
  - **Teresa Howes**, Assistant Manager, School of Business, Economics and Informatics, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016
  - **Sarah Hart**, Professor of Mathematics, School of Business, Economics and Informatics, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016
  - **Baroness Joan Bakewell**, President of Birkbeck, 16<sup>th</sup> September 2016
  - **Almuth McDowell**, Professor of Head of Department of Organisational Psychology, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017
  - **Hilary Downes**, Professor of Geochemistry at the School of Earth Sciences, Birkbeck College, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2017

### Experienced Professors

- University of London Female STEMM Professor Network created
- Network launch event, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 – roundtable and networking event held in association with the Birkbeck Athena SWAN team, where topics included career progression (including aspirations and limitations), gender-specific limitations and solutions, and the definition of success

### Findings

The programme aimed to enable women to achieve more within their careers, and throughout the project it became clear that women at all levels of their careers felt in need of training on the topic of leadership. This is best exemplified by the request of a senior female professor to join a 2016 workshop on influencing skills intended for early career researchers, who had never been offered any training or knowledge on the topic in the course of her career. This prompted the TRIGGER team to expand the reach of the workshops beyond Birkbeck.

The University of London Female Professor Network was originally intended to hold two networking events per year. These were intended to be events where attendees could informally discuss the challenges and issues facing their leadership outside their work environments, and to make contacts for their own professional development. The first was held by TRIGGER and led by Birkbeck College, with the intention that follow-up events would be held by other University of London Colleges. However, a low attendance level meant that sufficient momentum for the Network was not achieved, and so the second event did not take place.

Originally, a key aim of the leadership programme was to create a career development website relevant to all Birkbeck staff, which would allow them to find all the information necessary for their career development and growth in one specific central location on the College's website. In the event, only the section of the website devoted to early career

researchers and junior academics was completed, and was incorporated into the Birkbeck Human Resources Department website.

## *Legacy*

### **Subsequent events**

As a result of the successful leadership programme, academic publisher Taylor & Francis sponsored two subsequent series of TRIGGER events at Birkbeck. The first was a public event series targeted at businesspeople, academics and researchers on the theme of diversity and inclusion in research, which combined panel discussions and question and answer sessions with networking receptions, one per academic term:

- 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 'How to Break the Glass Ceiling?' The members of the panel were drawn from Birkbeck academics, business, and consulting, and discussed the application of the concept of gender cultures to business and academia, and practical strategies for making senior management structures more representative of their employees, students, and customers.
- 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 'Is leadership gender-biased from its roots?' The members of the panel were drawn from Birkbeck academics, consulting, corporate media, and recruiting, and discussed the concept of leadership, and whether it is gender-biased.
- 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019, 'Women & Career: Why diversity & inclusion are critical for the future of STEMM research.' The members of the panel were drawn from Birkbeck academics, the world of business, and digital ethics, and discussed why diversity and inclusion are critical to research, technology, data, and society.

The second sponsored event series was a collection of workshops open to the public led by TRIGGER team members Jeanne Le Roux or Andrew Atter. Each workshop was scheduled for lunchtime, with a catered lunch for attendees, capped of 20 participants, to ensure a wide range of people could benefit from the expertise of workshop leaders.

- 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019, **Goal-setting for women working in professional environment**, which addressed the obstacles to women pursuing a clear and balanced set of professional goals, and provided practical steps to counteract these obstacles.
- 7<sup>th</sup> May 2019, **Be Agile! Using the right mix of leadership styles for your team**, which aimed to help leaders to build motivated and diverse teams, recognising how systematic forces can affect individuals' contributions.
- 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019, **Influencing Skills Workshop**, in which participants learned practical and ethical strategies for influencing outcomes in situations where they may lack traditional forms of organisational power.

These events were widely publicised, both internally through TRIGGER and College-wide mailing lists, and externally through Taylor & Francis' networks. Combining participants from a wide range of fields, such as business, think tanks, consultancy, and digital activism also

ensured that women outside academia could bring their insights to bear on academics' research and experiences in these events.

### **Video series**

The series of *Inspiring Female* video interviews was added to the programme in order to make an argument for its sustainability; while in-person events were considered a strength, TRIGGER was aware that time and location constraints – and the demands of career progression – would limit attendees. The series was made available as publicly as possible through the TRIGGER project website, and hosted on the Birkbeck College YouTube channel. Interviews with successful women at the College was considered the most impactful way to raise awareness of existing career progression paths for female role models. The interviews prompted such a positive response that they were incorporated into an expanded series on gender equality at Birkbeck featuring the contributions of senior men in leadership positions at the College, titled *Women In Birkbeck*, published on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The series currently has 2,950 views on YouTube, and more views on the College website (view count unknown).

The additional contributors to the *Women in Birkbeck* series are:

- **John Driffill**, Head of Department, Professor in Department of Economics, Mathematics and Statistics
- **Stephen Frosh**, Pro-Vice Master and Chair of Internal Board of TRIGGER, Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychosocial Studies
- **John Kempton**, Director of Human Resources
- **David Latchman**, Vice-Chancellor of Birkbeck, Professor of Genetics, School of Science
- **Leslie Moran**, Chair of Birkbeck's Equality Committee, Professor in School of Law
- **Philip Powell**, Dean of the School of Business, Economics and Informatics

## **Researcher Profiles**



## Dr Andrew Atter

Former Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Birkbeck (2012-14), now currently Visiting Fellow at the Birkbeck Centre of Innovation and Management Research (CIMR), and recently been appointed Innovation Coach at the University of Liverpool. Andrew is a professionally accredited Executive Coach and Board Mentor with the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC).

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### Impact of the TRIGGER Project

My involvement with TRIGGER began quite early as I had a unique opportunity to discuss with Professor Lawton Smith the project planning and budgeting of Module II and was, therefore, able to see how a multi-country EU-funded project was designed in its entirety. This experience was directly valuable when I later became involved in the EU-funded MELES project, involving universities in 5 European countries.

The TRIGGER team started from the premise that if women were to play a more significant role in scientific leadership they would need enhanced development to enable them to get there. The predicament female scientists faced was putting themselves forward for jobs without having the proven experience. Therefore, self-efficacy and addressing "imposter syndrome" were prominent themes. TRIGGER addressed systems change and this perspective profoundly impacted the way I approached this field. For example, I was able to see how access to funding, professional reputation and team leadership were all key to progression in scientific careers.

Module II involved a series of workshops to open up discussion on these issues for female and male scientists. We had to go beyond the polarisation of gender politics and solve practical issues for Science as a social process. Following on from this, we delivered group mentoring and individual coaching for female scientists. In this way, we could address both the macro-organisational issues and drill down into highly personal factors, ranging from the ability to pitch for funds, getting published and leading diverse teams.

Three key findings emerged from this module:

- a. Set leadership development as a strategic priority in Science, including inclusivity/diversity training.
- b. Boosting the change management capacity across the organisation
- c. Engaging male scientists in creating gender balance

As a member of the TRIGGER Management Board, I shared these findings and established connections with other module leaders. The systemic and institutional approach certainly influenced my approach to executive coaching and cemented a long-standing interest in gender-related issues.

### Subsequent Activities

- Case Study, "Journaling as a tool of informal learning": <https://www.routledge.com/Informal-Learning-Practitioner-Inquiry-and-Occupational-Education-An/Sutton-Loo/p/book/9780367894849>
- Case Study, EntreComp into Action: A user guide to the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC109128>
- Birkbeck CIMR Webinar: Gaming and Gender: Video gaming as a catalyst for learning innovation: <http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/cimr/2020/12/19/gaming-and-gender-video-gaming-as-a-catalyst-for-learning-innovation>
- Birkbeck CIMR Annual Strategy Meeting lecture (2018): The Ethics of AI: The genie is out of the bottle: <http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/cimr/2019/05/28/the-ethics-of-ai-the-genie-is-out-of-the-bottle/>



## Silvia Cervia, PhD

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### Impact of the *TRIGGER* Project at Professional/Institutional level

Initially *TRIGGER* gave me the opportunity to become a Junior Researcher in Sociology of Cultural Process and Communication at the University of Pisa; thanks to the results obtained during the *TRIGGER* project the Department confirmed my position for a further two years at the end of the project. The research practice in an international network and the management skills honed during the *TRIGGER* project enhanced my profile so that in 2018 I obtained the National Scientific Qualification to function as Associate Professor, and am now in my current tenure track role as Senior Researcher at the University of Pisa. In this role I became (from 2020) the Department Delegate for Quality Assurance.

As a result of the *TRIGGER* project, a course in *Gender and Society* has been introduced at Departmental level (which I held for the first 4 years, currently run by Professor Rita Biancheri, leader of the *TRIGGER* project at the University of Pisa), a course in [Gender Issues and University: Research, Education and Institutional Engagement](#) has been introduced as mandatory and transversal skills for all the PhD students at the University of Pisa (taught by me and colleagues from SSH and from STEM), a Rector's Delegate for *Gender Studies and Equal Opportunities* has been established, and in 2020, as a result of the implementation of the *TRIGGER* gender Database, the University of Pisa approved the first edition of [UniPi Gender Budget](#).

### Impact of the *TRIGGER* Project in my Research Activities

*Gender and Science* became one of my main topic research areas, in the twofold meaning of analyzing barriers at societal, organizational, and individual level to female participation in academic institutions, and of studying the social (and institutional) construction of gendering contents of science. I have presented my analysis in several national and international scientific conferences, and I have published the results obtained in national and international journals, in collective books, and in a monograph (see the selected list of publications).

I am grateful to Professor Helen Lawton Smith, the leader of the *TRIGGER* project at Birkbeck College, for involving me in collective publication – Cervia (2020)\* – and for introducing me to an international research network on *Social Innovation*, in which I am working on “Gendering Social Innovation”.

### Selected Publications

- **Cervia S.** (2020), “Sul processo di definizione di Genere e Scienza come «problema sociale»: tra CSP, contestualismo e *cultural studies*”, in B. Casalini e P. Tomio (a cura di), *Diversamente scienza*, Firenze: University Press, Firenze: 65-81.
- **Cervia S.** (2020), “Genere e scienza nelle policies europee. Aprire la black box della narrazione dominante”, in M.M. Coppola, A. Donà, B. Poggio e A. Tuselli (a cura di), *Genere e R-Esistenze in movimento: Soggettività, Azioni e Prospettive*, Editrice Università degli studi di Trento, Trento: 109-120.
- **\*Cervia S.** (2020), “Using the embedded case study approach to analyse the leaky pipeline phenomenon in academic careers”, in H. Lawton Smith, C. Henry, H. Etzkowitz and A. Poulouvasilis (eds), *New Perspectives in Gender, Science & Innovation*, London: Edward Elgar: 82-105.
- **Cervia S.** (2019), “Looking Gender and Science at micro level: Narrative Identity and the Socialization of Master Narratives”, *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, 9(3): 37-52.
- Biancheri R., **Cervia S.** (2018), “Women in Academic Medicine: The Leaking Process in Italy”, in A. Zamfira, Ch. de Montlibert, D. Radu (eds), *Gender in Focus: Identities, Codes, Stereotypes and Politics*. Berlin: Barbara Budrich Publishers: 287-306.
- **Cervia S.** (2018), *Genere e Scienza come costruzione sociale. Il ruolo delle istituzioni nei processi di ricerca*, Franco Angeli, Milano.
- Biancheri R., **Cervia S.** (2017), “Women in science: the persistence of traditional gender roles. A case study on work-life interface”, *European Educational Research Journal*, 16(2-3): 215–229.



## Giovanna Declich

Senior researcher at Knowledge and Innovation (*Conoscenza e Innovazione*), sociologist and gender expert.

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### Impact of the TRIGGER Project

Working in TRIGGER in the technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation of the action plans since the very beginning (starting two years before by accompanying the other partners in devising their action plans) permitted to apply and formalise in the final guidelines the evaluation model based on the actors' mobilisation theory which was already used by the STAGES project and subsequently refined by the LIBRA project ([Leading Innovative measures to reach gender Balance in Research Activities](#)). My personal and institutional network has been strengthened, so that my organization has been convened in consortia to implement gender mainstreaming projects which conclude the EU-DG R&I programming period 2013-2020, i.e., GE Academy (<https://ge-academy.eu>) and CASPER (Certification-Award Systems to Promote gender Equality in Research, <https://www.caspergender.eu>). Such projects are providing information and insights to the EC gender equality policy for research in the forthcoming Horizon Europe programme.

### Subsequent Activities

Concerning gender and science, after TRIGGER and thanks to the experience accumulated I have been participating as leader or team member in EU-H2020 projects such as CASPER and LIBRA. I am currently the coordinator of the MINDtheGEPs (Modifying Institution by Developing Gender Equality Plans) team of Knowledge and Innovation, in charge of monitoring and evaluating seven gender equality plans. As a gender expert organisation, Knowledge and Innovation was part of the project design team of MINDtheGEPs and will give a cross-cutting support to all the activities. Besides, I am currently leading the Knowledge and Innovation team for the RECIPES projects, concerning the application of the precautionary principle in Europe. In this latter, I am in charge of ensuring that the gender dimension is kept in due consideration all along the research, co-creation and communication activities.

### Recent Publications

- (forthcoming) Pisacane, L. and **Declich G.**, La questione di genere nella transizione tra Horizon 2020 e Horizon Europe: verso un sistema europeo di certificazione per la gender equality? (The gender dimension in the transition between Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe: towards a European certification system for gender equality?) In: Avveduto S. (ed.) (2021) *La ricerca nell'anno della pandemia (Research in the year of pandemics)* Roma: CNR Edizioni.
- Bleijenbergh, I., Cacace, M., Falcinelli, D., del Giorgio, E., **Declich, G.** (2020). How Dutch and Italian women's networks mobilize affect to foster transformative change towards gender equality, July 2020 *European Journal of Women s Studies* 28(1):135050682094113  
DOI: 10.1177/1350506820941136
- **Declich, G.** (2019) Europa 2020 e oltre: la sfida della ricerca sensibile al genere (Europe 2020 and beyond: the challenge of gender-sensitive research), in: Avveduto S. (a cura di). (2019). *Ricerca: femminile, plurale (Research: feminine, plural)* Roma: CNR Edizioni. DOI: 10.14600/97888880803690
- Cacace, M., d'Andrea L. and **Declich, G.** (2018). Accompanying research on implementation dynamics; final report of the STAGES (Structural Change to Achieve Gender Equality in Science) project, DOI:10.13140/RG.2.2.31512.4992
- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323227952\\_Structural\\_Transformation\\_to\\_Achieve\\_Gender\\_Equality\\_in\\_Science\\_-\\_Final\\_research\\_report](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323227952_Structural_Transformation_to_Achieve_Gender_Equality_in_Science_-_Final_research_report)
- **Declich G.** with; d'Andrea L. and the TRIGGER project partners (2017). *Triggering Institutional Change Towards Gender Equality in Science, Final Guidelines of the TRIGGER Project* <http://triggerproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/TRIGGERING-PAGG-SINGOLE.pdf>



## Professor Colette Henry, PhD

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### Impact of the TRIGGER Project

TRIGGER allowed me to access an international network of gender equality STEM-related researchers and practitioners. It also generated a number of guest speaker and facilitator invitations at conferences and workshops. I co-edited a gender equality book with Professor Lawton Smith et al. (2020)\*. We also presented TRIGGER findings to Ireland's Athena Swan National Committee. Birkbeck's follow-up work enhanced my profile; I subsequently became a Fellow of their Centre for Innovation Management Research (CIMR) and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. My H-index on Google scholar and citations of my research have also increased significantly (H-index 35; citations 5,000+).

### Subsequent Activities

The resulting international exposure from TRIGGER allowed me to engage in more STEM-related research internationally; become involved in a new EU project on entrepreneurship; win two major international awards (Diana Trailblazer; European Entrepreneurship Educator Award); establish the Global Women's Entrepreneurship Policy Research Network ([www.globalwep.org](http://www.globalwep.org)), and produce a major collaborative report with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development\*\* (thanks to an initial introduction by Professor Lawton Smith). I am grateful to Professor Helen Lawton Smith for leading the TRIGGER project, and for her continued follow-up work to sustain TRIGGER outputs through the CIMR.

### Recent Publications

- \*\*Henry, C. et al. & Potter, J. et al. (Editors). OECD & Global WEP (2021). *Entrepreneurship Through A Gender Lens: An international collection of policy insights*, OECD, Paris, 17th May.
- Lewis, K.V., Henry, C. & Roy, M.J. (2021). Tethering Mission to Context? Exploring Narratives Underpinning the Competing Social and Financial Imperatives of Social Enterprise. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1-21 (early cite).
- Nziku, D.M. & Henry, C. (2020). Policies for supporting women entrepreneurs in developing countries: the case of Tanzania, *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 10(1): 38-58.
- Henry, C. (2020). Reconceptualising the role of the future entrepreneurship educator: An exploration of the content challenge. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, on line first, March 2020, Open Access. [Doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2020.1737416](https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2020.1737416).
- \*Lawton Smith, H., Henry, C., Etzkowitz, H. & Poulouvasilis, A. (Eds) (2020). *New Perspectives in Gender, Science and Innovation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Coleman, S., Henry, C., Orser, B., Foss, L. & Welter, F. (2019). Policy support for women entrepreneurs' access to financial capital: A comparative analysis of Canada, Germany, Ireland, Norway, and the U.S. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(2): 296-322.
- Yousafzai, S., Fayolle, A., Saeed, S., Henry, C. & Lindgreen, A. (2019). Contextual embeddedness of women's entrepreneurship: Taking stock and looking ahead. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 31(3-4):167-177.
- Foss, L., Henry, C. & Ahl, H. (2019). Women's entrepreneurship Policy: A 30-year review, *Small Business Economics*, 53: 409-429.



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### Impact of the *TRIGGER* Project

Working as a research assistant for TRIGGER significantly shaped my profile to get me ready for an academic career. TRIGGER gave me exposure through a variety of workshops and conference presentations, in the UK and abroad; for example, we presented our results at the international conference of the European Group for Organizational Studies, and at the British Academy of Management. We submitted evidence to the House of the Commons “Women and Equalities Select Committee” (Women in executive management inquiry). My 2017 paper\* co-authored with Helen Lawton Smith on mentoring for women academics, in the *Journal of Research in Gender Studies*, attracted a lot of attention (47 citations at May 2021) and I was invited to join the editorial board of the journal. I also published book chapters, with the TRIGGER team and as a solo\*\*. While working for TRIGGER, I became involved in the Athena-SWAN self-assessment panel at Birkbeck. At the end of my work for TRIGGER I was able to secure an academic position. When I started to work for TRIGGER I was a fresh PhD graduate with one citation only. Now I have more than 100, with H-index 6.

### Subsequent Activities

Thanks to the expertise in gender equality and organizational change that I gained in the TRIGGER project, I am often invited as an expert in panel discussions, and also in European projects. For example, I delivered two mini-lectures for the Horizon 2020 Gender Academy project (2020), and recently I acted as an expert for the Horizon 2020 Casper project. I was able to get a conference stream accepted at the prestigious Gender, Work and Organization 2021 Conference. This would have not been possible without TRIGGER; working with Professor Helen Lawton Smith and her team was a very enriching experience, which significantly impacted my professional pathway.

### Recent Publications in the field of gender equality

- \*\***Meschitti V.** 2020. Being an early-career academic today: is there space for gender equality in the neo-liberal university? In Lawton Smith, H., Henry, C., Etkowitz H. and A. Poulouvasilis (Eds.) *Gender, Science and Innovation. New Perspectives* (pp. 16-34). Elgar Publishing.
- Lawton Smith H., **Meschitti V.**, Le Roux J., Panton M., Baines N., Poulouvasilis A and C. Henry. 2020. Gender differences in the commercialisation of research: a study in UK universities. In Lawton Smith, H., Henry, C., Etkowitz H. and A. Poulouvasilis (Eds.) *Gender, Science and Innovation. New Perspectives* (pp. 242-260). Elgar Publishing.
- Henry C., Lawton Smith H., **Meschitti V.**, Foss L. and P. McGowan. 2020. Networking, gender and academia: an ecosystems approach. In Lawton Smith, H., Henry, C., Etkowitz H. and A. Poulouvasilis (Eds.) *Gender, Science and Innovation. New Perspectives* (pp. 146-167). Elgar Publishing.
- **Meschitti, V.** 2019. Making people grow: a new understanding of organisational ethics with Deleuze and Guattari. In Fotaki, M, Islam, G. and A. Antoni (Eds.) *Business Ethics and Care in Organizations* (pp. 25-39). London: Routledge.
- Marini G., and **V. Meschitti**. 2018. The trench warfare of gender discrimination: evidence from academic promotions to full professor in Italy. *Scientometrics*, 115(2), 989-1006.
- \***Meschitti V.** and H. Lawton Smith. 2017. Does Mentoring Make a Difference for Women Academics? Evidence from the Literature and a Guide for Future Research, *Journal of Research in Gender Studies* 7(1): 166–199.
- Lawton Smith H., Etkowitz H., **Meschitti V.** and A. Poulouvasilis. 2017. Female Academic Entrepreneurship: Reviewing the evidence and identifying the challenges. In Henry C., Nelson T., and K. Lewis (Eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Global Female Entrepreneurship*. London: Routledge.



## Jeanne Le Roux

After 10 years in external and internal audit in large corporate organisations such as Arthur Andersen, The Walt Disney Company, G4S and Diageo, I transferred my career focus from a specialist auditor to focus on people management. Within my audit department at Diageo I started a People Subgroup to engage and empower people to be their best. I originated a set of my own departmental values, which was replicated in other departments within the company. I then moved to a Learning and Development Manager role to further develop people skills in technical finance and leadership. At Diageo I was in charge of Pink Day, as well as a member of their Spirited Women Network, devoted to retention and development of women employees. I was also instrumental in changing the management of a major finance project at Diageo.

I then left the corporate world to put my skills into practice in start-ups and SMEs (Small Medium Enterprises). I have been a mentor and coach at several incubators, including Bathtub 2 Boardroom, Angel Academe, BBC Lab, and Wayra UK. Between 2016 and 2018 I joined the steering group of the Tech Talent Charter so that I could drive the diversity agenda in technology and business.

My involvement in the TRIGGER project started when I met Professor Helen Lawton Smith at the very beginning, when its governance was being set up. They had an external advisory board made of businesspeople and academics, as well as an internal advisory board. In my capacity as a member of the Institute of Directors Start-up Group, Professor Lawton Smith invited me to join the TRIGGER board.

In April 2016, I became the TRIGGER researcher focused primarily on the leadership and career path deliverables. I developed new means of communication within the project, setting up the video series Birkbeck Leaders Speak, and Birkbeck Women Role Models. I developed a set of leadership workshops for all people within Birkbeck. We switched the project's focus to being more inclusive, by including participants from administrative backgrounds as well as academic ones. This switch in focus also created new more inclusive events, resulting in communication with the wider Birkbeck community through blog posts.

After TRIGGER project concluded, Taylor & Francis gave us a grant to further develop events. I organised events around diversity and inclusivity topics, as well as several workshops such as the Be Agile! Using the Right Mix of Leadership Styles for Your Team seminar (May 2017). This was followed by further events in 2018 and 2019, including Women & Career: Why Diversity & Inclusion Are Critical for the Future of STEMM Research discussion panel (July 2019) and Is Leadership Gender Bias From Its Roots? networking event (March 2019).

TRIGGER allowed me to better understand the challenges within universities to diversity, inclusion, and belonging in a more holistic way. It strengthened my leadership skills, and further developed my teaching skills, which contributed to me becoming an Associate Lecturer in Audit, Entrepreneurship and Human Resources.

## Impacts:

### *Trigger Publications*

#### Working Papers

1. Helen Lawton Smith, Colette Henry, Henry Etzkowitz, and Viviana Meschitti, and Alex Poulouvassilis, '[Female Academic Entrepreneurship: Reviewing the Evidence and Identifying the Challenges](#)'
2. Anna-Lena Vallentin, '[Academic Careers in SET in the UK: the Gendered Experiences and Career Progression of PhD Students and Postdoctoral Researchers](#)'
3. Viviana Meschitti, Wendy Hein, Henry Etzkowitz, and Helen Lawton Smith, '[Gender Cultures in Research and Science: an Investigation at Birkbeck](#)'
4. Viviana Meschitti, '[Embarking on a Doctoral Journey: Insights from a Longitudinal Study on Decision-Making during a PhD](#)'

All working papers available at the TRIGGER website: [www.bbk.ac.uk/trigger/our-research/research-and-publications/trigger-working-paper-series](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/trigger/our-research/research-and-publications/trigger-working-paper-series)

#### Books

- Helen Lawton Smith, Colette Henry, Henry Etzkowitz and Alexandra Poulouvassilis (eds), *New Perspectives in Gender, Science & Innovation*, Edward Elgar Publishing (2020)
- Tim Vorley, Helen Lawton Smith and Beldina Owalla (eds) *Gender, Diversity and Innovation: Concepts, Policies and Practice*, Edward Elgar Publishing (forthcoming 2022)

#### Journal Articles

- Bedford, R., Jones, E. J., Johnson, M. H., Pickles, A., Charman, T., & T. (2016). Sex differences in the association between infant markers and later autistic traits. *Molecular Autism*, 7(1), 1.
- Lawton Smith H., Meschitti V., 2015. Transforming Institutions by Gendering Contents and Gaining Equality in Research (Viewpoint), *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 7(3). DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJGE-06-2015-0018>
- Meschitti V. and H. Lawton Smith. 2017. Does Mentoring Make a Difference for Women Academics? Evidence from the Literature and a Guide for Future Research, *Journal of Research in Gender Studies* 7(1): 166–199.
- Ovseiko, P, Lawton Smith, H and 39 other authors (2016) 'A global call for action to include gender in research impact assessment' *Health Research Policy and Systems* Impact factor 1.810 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s12961-016-0126-z>

#### Reports

- Henry, C. et al. & Potter, J. et al. (Editors), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report (2021), 'Entrepreneurship Policies through a Gender Lens: An International Collection of Policy Insights', OECD Studies on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2021 <https://doi.org/10.1787/71c8f9c9-en>.

#### Book Chapters

- Henry, C Lawton Smith, H, Meschitti, M Foss, L and McGowan, P (2020) 'Networking, gender and academia: an ecosystems approach' in H. Lawton Smith, C. Henry, H. Etzkowitz & A Poulouvassilis (eds) *New Perspectives in Gender, Science & Innovation*, Edward Elgar Publishing 146-167
- Lawton Smith, H, Meschitti, V Le Roux, J Panton, M Baines, N Poulouvassilis, A and Henry, C (2020) 'Gender differences in the commercialisation of research: a study in UK universities' in H. Lawton Smith, C. Henry, H. Etzkowitz & A Poulouvassilis (eds) *New Perspectives in Gender, Science & Innovation*, Edward Elgar Publishing 242-260
- Lawton Smith, H, Etzkowitz, H Meschitti, V and Poulouvassilis, A (2017) 'Female Academic Entrepreneurship and Commercialisation: Reviewing the evidence and identifying the challenges' in C. Henry, T. Nelson and K. Lewis (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Global Female Entrepreneurship*, Routledge 78-92
- Meschitti, V (2020) 'Being an early-career academic today: is there space for gender equality in the neo-liberal university?' in Lawton Smith, Henry, Etzkowitz, Poulouvassilis (Eds.) *New Perspectives in Gender, Science & Innovation*, Edward Elgar Publishing 16-34

### Report Chapters

- Helen Lawton Smith and Tim Vorley, 'United Kingdom' policy insight note in *Entrepreneurship Policies through a Gender Lens* (2021), OECD Studies on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, OECD Publishing, Paris, 58-60, <https://doi.org/10.1787/71c8f9c9-en>.

### Conference Presentations

- Meschitti, V. 2017. Embarking in a doctoral journey: insights from a longitudinal study on decision-making along the PhD. European Conference on Educational Research (ECER), 22-25 August 2017, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Meschitti, V., Hein W. 2017. Making people grow: A new understanding of organisational ethics with Deleuze and Guattari. 33<sup>rd</sup> EGOS (European Group for Organizational Studies) Colloquium, 5-8 July 2017, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Meschitti, V. 2017. In the flow of becoming. Studying gender and career with Deleuze and Guattari. 9<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Process Organization Studies, 22-24 June 2017, Kos, Greece.
- Lawton Smith, H, Meschitti, V, Le Roux, J Panton, M Etzkowitz, H Baines, N, Poulouvassilis, A and Henry, C Gender differences in commercialisation of research: an investigation at Birkbeck, presentation at the Triple Helix Conference Heidelberg 25-27 September 2016
- Meschitti, V. 2016. Gender cultures in academia. How careers develop in a gendered environment. 9<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Gender Equality in Higher Education and Research, 12-14 September 2016, Paris, France.
- Meschitti, V. 2016. The struggle for equality in academia. The gendered effects of an apparently innocent work allocation. 30<sup>th</sup> British Academy of Management Conference, 6-8 September 2016, Newcastle, UK.
- Meschitti V., Hein W., Etzkowitz H., and H. Lawton Smith. 2015. Gender and the construction of career paths in academia. *Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference*, 9-11 December 2015, Newport, UK.
- Meschitti V., Hein W., Etzkowitz H., and H. Lawton Smith. 2015. Getting the deliverable ready: Time and times in the conduction of a European project. 31<sup>st</sup> EGOS (European Group for Organizational Studies) Colloquium, 2-4 July 2015, Athens, Greece.

- Meschitti V., Lawton Smith H., and A. Vallentin. 2014. Mentoring to guide women's academic careers. A review and proposition for future research. *Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference*, 10-12 December 2014, Newport, UK.

### **Invited Talk**

- Meschitti, V (2017) Panellist in WISE – Women in Science and Engineering event. *The challenges for women professionals along their path to senior roles. Progressing your female talent to senior roles*. Bristol April 4<sup>th</sup> 2017.

## **TRIGGER IMPACT at European level**

### ***Inclusion in GEAR toolbox***

As requested by the European Commission offices at the end of the project, the nine TRIGGER actions and their results have been reported in the Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) toolbox, devised by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) to support research and Higher Education institutions wanting to set up gender equality plans to effect institutional change (for more information see <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/examples/compulsory-awareness-raising-session-ba-students>).

### ***Resources for Europe-wide training on gender equality***

The TRIGGER guidelines, which combine the findings of the implementing partners and some contributions from "sister projects", are part of the inventory of key resources created for the EU funded project Gender Equality Academy, one of the main projects on gender equality concluding the programming period 2014-2020 part of the Horizon2020 project. (for more information, see <https://ge-academy.eu/deliverables/>). This means that TRIGGER has been instrumental in developing key materials for training representatives of hundreds of European universities.

### ***Evaluation model integrated into award scheme criteria***

The evaluation model used in the TRIGGER and STAGES (Structural Transformation to Achieve Gender Equality in Science) projects, subsequently refined in LIBRA (Leading Innovative measures to reach gender Balance in Research Activities) has been designated as one of the criteria on which to award a European Gender Equality Certification-Award Scheme currently under consideration by the European Commission (see <https://www.caspergender.eu>).

### ***Mobilising a network of "sister projects"***

TRIGGER's model of sharing and discussing methodologies and tools has been continued through events such as conferences, workshops, and online activities across Europe by its former project co-ordinators and partners. For a list of projects using gender action plans to effect institutional change, see <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/key-resources>.

# Links and Resources

## **TRIGGER at Birkbeck**

<http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/trigger/>

## **TRIGGER Project EU**

<http://triggerproject.eu>

## **Athena SWAN**

<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan-charter>

## **Birkbeck Gender and Sexuality**

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/research/centres/birkbeck-gender-and-sexuality/>

## **UK Parliamentary Women and Equalities Select Committee**

<https://old.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/women-and-equalities-committee>



*Report compiled by Dr Beatrice Bazell*

